

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 LAB-04

CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08 SIL-01 /110 W

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O R 011235Z MAR 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5533

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 1467

PASS LABOR AND COMMERCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ILO

SUBJECT: ILO - STATUS REPORT ON ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE

REF: GENEVA 1298

1. USDEL HOROWITZ SPOKE TO BERGENSTROM (VICE CHAIRMAN OF EMPLOYER GROUP OF GOVERNING BODY (GB)) WHO INDICATED EMPLOYER GROUP STILL UNDECIDED ON ITS POSITION, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF DESIRE TO HAVE UNITED RATHER THAN SPLIT POSITION I GROUP. HOROWITZ REMINDED HIM THAT IF GROUP PUT UNITY BEFORE PRINCIPLE THIS WOULD BE A REPETITION OF SITUATION WHICH HAD LED US TO SEND LETTER OF INTENT. SUCH ACTION BY EMPLOYER GROUP ON BASIC ISSUE OF DUE PROCESS WOULD HAVE VERY SERIOUS IMPACT ON US-ILO RELATIONS.

SUBSEQUENT INFORMATION ON EMPLOYER GROUP INDICATES MEMBERS HAVE CONCLUDED THIS IS ISSUE IN WHICH EACH MEMBER MUST TAKE INDIVIDUAL STANCE, AS HAS BEEN DONE IN PAST  
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ON SOME ISSUES. DISCUSSIONS WITH VARIOUS EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES REFLECTS THAT SUPPORT GROWING FOR "CLOSING THE BOOK."

2. ISRAELI AMBASSADOR MERON TOLD USDEL HOROWITZ THAT HE HAD RECEIVED CLEAR-CUT INSTRUCTIONS FROM GOI THAT GOI WOULD NOT RPT NOT COOPERATE WITH ANY FURTHER

EFFORTS BY ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL (DG) TO INVESTIGATE CONDITIONS OF ARAB WORKERS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. MERON SAID HE HAD INFORMED THE DG OF THIS AND HAD ALSO TOLD BERGENSTROM. BERGENSTROM HAD REFERRED TO HIS OWN EARLIER TALK WITH HOROWITZ AND REMINDED MERON THAT AS VICE CHAIRMAN HE HAD AGREED TO POST-PONEMENT LAST NOVEMBER ON CONDITION THAT MATTER BE DISPOSED OF NOW. HE ASSURED MERON OF HIS OWN POSITION TO SUPPORT DG REPORT RECOMMENDATION.

3. IRVING BROWN TOLD HOROWITZ THAT TWELVE OF FOURTEEN WORKERS (TUNISIA AND USSR OPPOSED) FAVOR ACCEPTING DG'S REPORT (I.E., "CLOSE THE BOOK").

4. AT MEETING OF IMEC GROUP (AFTERNOON OF FEB. 28) NO ONE HAD ANY SPECIFIC INFORMATION AS TO ARAB PLANS (WHICH WERE APPARENTLY STILL UNDECIDED), ALTHOUGH HOROWITZ SAID SOME ARABS APPEAR TO BE ASSUMING THAT DG'S REPORT WILL BE ADOPTED (BY SECRET BALLOT). HE ADDED THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT ARABS

MAY BE LESS INCLINED NOW THAN PREVIOUSLY TO PRESS FOR CONFRONTATION ON THIS ISSUE, SINCE SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST IS DELICATE AND ILO ISSUE MAY SEEM TO THEM SUBSIDIARY ESPECIALLY AS THEY HAVE EXPLOITED THIS ISSUE IN ILO FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS. HOROWITZ REMINDED IMEC MEMBERS OF THEIR AGREEMENT IN NOVEMBER TO SUPPORT "CLOSING THE BOOK," AND NO ONE DISSENTED. HOROWITZ REBUTTED CONTENTION OF SOME GB MEMBERS  
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THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO FIND WAY TO "SAVE FACE" FOR ARABS, AND POINTED OUT THAT THIS WOULD ONLY ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR DISRUPTIVE TACTICS, WHICH COULD LEAD TO DESTRUCTION OF ILO. FINALLY, HE REPORTED THAT ALMOST ALL WORKER REPS AND SOME EMPLOYER REPS SUPPORT ACCEPTING DG'S REPORT.

5. ARAB GROUP MET AFTERNOON OF FEB. 28 BUT REACHED NO DECISION ON TACTICS OTHER THAN TO TRY TO PERSUADE US TO "LET MATTER SLIDE" FOR A FEW MONTHS, ON ASSUMPTION THAT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION WOULD IMPROVE TO POINT THAT ISSUE IN ILO COULD BE DROPPED. ARAB LABOR ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE NUR AND SOMALI AMBASSADOR OSMAN MET WITH HOROWITZ LATER AND INFORMED HIM OF ARAB POSITION. THEY INDICATED THEIR ESTIMATE THAT US HAS VOTES TO WIN ON SECRET BALLOT, I.E. TO HAVE DG'S REPORT ACCEPTED, AND ALSO SAID THEY DID NOT SEEK A MAJOR CONFRONTATION ON ISSUE IN THIS GB.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 1467

PASS LABOR AND COMMERCE

6. HOROWITZ EXPLAINED THIS IS NOT MIDDLE EAST ISSUE  
BUT ONE OF DUE PROCESS; WE ARE ON GOOD TERMS WITH  
ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND ARE HOPEFUL OF PROGRESS IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST BUT THESE FACTS DO NOT AFFECT ILO ISSUE  
WHICH IS ONE OF FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE. WHEN  
NUR AND OSMAN REALIZED US WOULD NOT AGREE TO LET  
MATTER SLIDE THEY THEN INDICATED THAT "CLOSING THE BOOK"  
NOW MIGHT LEAD TO THREE WEEK'S OF CONTROVERSY IN THE  
JUNE 1977 CONFERENCE, BUT DID NOT INDICATE WHAT  
THEIR TACTICS WOULD BE AT THE PLENARY THIS WEEK.

7. DURING THE FOREGOING DISCUSSIONS, ARABS REFERRED  
TO ARTICLE 17, INDICATING THEIR BELIEF THAT THIS PRO-  
POSAL FOR A SCREENING MECHANISM WAS AIMED AT THEM IN  
THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE IN THE  
GB. HOROWITZ EXPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH PRESENT PROBLEM  
IS RESULT OF KIND OF RESOLUTION WHICH CAUSED US TO  
INITIATE REVISION OF ARTICLE 17, WE HAVE OBJECTED  
TO MANY OTHER RESOLUTIONS AND WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT  
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AFTER MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM IS SOLVED THERE WILL STILL BE EFFORTS BY SOME ILO MEMBERS TO INTRODUCE RESOLUTIONS INTO CONFERENCE WHICH BY-PASS DUE PROCESS. ARABS SPOKESMAN DID NOT PURSUE MATTER OTHER THAN TO ALLEGE THAT SOME G-77 DELEGATES ARE DISSATISFIED WITH ARTICLE 17 REVISION.

8. OFFICERS OF FB HAVE AGREED TO RECOMMEND TO GB THAT ITEM BE MOVED UP ON AGENDA, TO BE CONSIDERED MARCH 2.

9. COMMENT: DISCUSSION WITH ARABS, WHICH EXTENDED OVER SEVERAL HOURS, WAS HELD IN ATMOSPHERE OF OPEN AND FRANK EXCHANGE, WITH COMMENTS AT END THAT EVEN IF AGREEMENT NOT REACHED, SUCH EXHAUSTIVE DISCUSSIONS USEFUL AND FREE INFORMAL COMMUNICATION SHOULD USEFULLY CONTINUE. FURTHER MEETINGS OF ARABS WILL PRESUMABLY LEAD TO SOME DECISION ON THEIR TACTICS. MEETING OF IMEC GROUP WILL BE HELD IF NECESSARY PRIOR TO DISCUSSION OF ISSUE IN GB, TO ASSESS ANY LAST-MINUTE DEVELOPMENTS. CATTO

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